FARMING FOR THE FUTURE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Agricultural Research
Council of Alberta

1983

Alberta
AGRICULTURE

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FARMING FOR THE FUTURE

Farming for the Future is a commitment of
the Alberta Government of funds from the
Heritage Savings Trust Fund to agricultural
research to improve net farm income and
the long-term viability of agriculture in the Province

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FARMING FOR THE FUTURE

Agricultural Research Council of Alberta

1. Objectives of Farming for the Future
   a. Improvement of the long-term viability of agriculture.
   b. Improvement of net farm income.
2. Function
   The Agricultural Research Council of Alberta (ARCA) as established by the Minister of Agriculture, Government of Alberta, to advise the Minister on the operation of Farming for the Future shall:
   a. Provide a forum for discussion of policy and program areas of relevance to Alberta's agricultural research needs.
   b. Ensure:
      (i) that existing programs are augmented and complemented in a manner consistent with increases in agricultural productivity,
      (ii) that emphasis is placed on co-ordination and effective transfer of new information to the agricultural community,
      (iii) maximization of use of existing research capabilities and facilities,
      (iv) continued support for research from industry and farm organizations,
      (v) development of a private sector capability in agricultural research in Alberta.
   c. Identify priorities and needs to ensure that the necessary planning is developed for continuity and expansion of agricultural research to meet the needs of Alberta's agricultural communities.
3. Membership of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta
   a. Membership of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta shall consist of:
      The Minister of Agriculture -- Chairman,
      The Deputy Minister of Agriculture -- Vice-Chairman
      Seven active producers from across Alberta, invited by the Minister,
      A representative of the University of Alberta,

A representative of the Alberta Research Council,
A member of the Alberta Department of Agriculture -- Secretary,
A member of the Legislative Assembly,
A representative of Agriculture Canada research stations,
The Chairman of the Alberta Irrigation Council.

b. An Executive Committee with authority to act on behalf of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta shall consist of:
The Minister of Agriculture -- Chairman,
The Deputy Minister of Agriculture -- Vice-Chairman,
That producer member of Council most appropriate to the subject matter under consideration,
A member of the Legislative Assembly,
A representative of the University of Alberta,
A member of the Alberta Department of Agriculture -- Secretary.

c. A quorum of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta shall consist of a majority of members.

d. Substitution or delegation of membership is not permitted.

e. A member's term of office shall be at pleasure.

(i) Effective April 1, 1984, and considering past service on the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta, the term of office for producer members shall not exceed three years and no more than one extension of three years shall be allowed.

(ii) The term of office for representatives of Agriculture Canada, the University of Alberta, and the Alberta Research Council shall be determined through consultation between the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta and the agency concerned.

4. Administrative Support

The Research Division of the Alberta Department of Agriculture shall provide all administrative services required in support of Farming for the Future. In this role, the Division, in consultation with the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta, shall:

a. Establish such procedures as necessary to effectively and efficiently administer the program.

b. Ensure research priorities are brought to Council for consideration.

c. Conduct on-site inspection and provide objective evaluation of research projects for consideration by the program committees and Council.

d. Obtain expert opinion and review of any proposal submitted to Farming for the Future.

e. Disseminate in an effective and efficient manner significant technological information resulting from Farming for the Future projects.

5. Agricultural Research Council of Alberta Guidelines

a. Definition of Terms

(i) Research essentially means any scientific inquiry directed toward the production of new knowledge, the solution of problems, the generation of new technology from an existing body of knowledge or creation of new systems, processes or products.

(ii) Demonstration is the process of illustrating or explaining to potential users the results of a successfully tested technology.

b. The Agricultural Research Council of Alberta provides financial assistance to program areas for the conduct of studies and demonstration projects having the potential to lead to increased agricultural productivity and to improved long-term viability of agriculture in Alberta.

c. Proposals for program support shall be reviewed by such committees as are necessary to the performance of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta's function, and will be judged on:

(i) the significance of the proposal to the advancement of Alberta's agricultural industry, and the improvement of the industry's competitive advantage,

(ii) the soundness and completeness of the experimental design,

(iii) the "track record" of the major project manager as indicated through his experience and demonstrated capability in the area of the project proposal,

(iv) the competence and productivity of the researcher(s) over the preceding three years as demonstrated by scientific articles in refereed journals being published in the discipline entailed in the proposed research,

(v) the size, duration and cost of the project, and

(vi) the organizational capability and commitment of the applicant(s) to complete the project.

d. The Agricultural Research Council of Alberta may form such program committees as are necessary to assess, review and implement projects within specific program areas.

e. Program committees may establish such policies and assign such functions to other groups, agencies or institutions as are necessary to their operation, subject to ratification by the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

f. Program committees shall ensure that review of each proposal directed to their area of concern is carried out, and that recommendations for action are made to the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta prior to any approval, expressed or implied.

g. The Alberta Department of Agriculture shall provide secretarial/clerical assistance as required by the program committees.

h. The Agricultural Research Council of Alberta will meet when called by the Council's Chairman to consider proposals and recommendations and to review ongoing and completed programs and projects.

i. Discussions and decisions of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta are confidential unless otherwise defined and may be subject to review by the Executive Council, Government of Alberta. Applicants will be notified in writing by the Council's Secretary within 30 days of decisions regarding proposals.

j. Developments, benefits, information, inventions, methods and processes conceived or developed or first actually reduced to practise under this program shall be the property of the Crown unless otherwise designated.

k. Funding

   (i) On approval of a project, the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta, in consultation with the Research Division, Alberta Department of Agriculture, shall establish such mechanisms as are necessary for payment of expenses incurred by that project.

   (ii) All awards are made under the Alberta Department of Agriculture Act and Alberta Agriculture Grant Regulations and hence are subject to audit.

(iii) Funds awarded by the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta are made only with the consent of, and may only be utilized at, that agency, institution, firm or organization named in the award.

(iv) Awards will normally be made on an annual basis although they may be made for longer periods at the discretion of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

(v) Funds allocated but not utilized by a project during a fiscal year must, upon request of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta, be returned to Farming for the Future. On Council's approval, funds carried over from a fiscal year may be applied towards the support of that same ongoing project in a new fiscal year.

(vi) The project manager and/or his employing institution shall:

(a) keep statements, invoices, accounts, receipts and other records of the costs and expenses incurred by the project, including all payroll records and time sheets, and any other documents relating to such project costs and expenses, and

(b) on demand, produce to the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta, Research Division of the Alberta Department of Agriculture, Auditor General and/or Provincial Treasurer every account, record or other document referred to in clause (a) above and permit the Secretary, Research Division, Auditor General and/or Provincial Treasurer to examine, audit and take copies and extracts from such accounts, records or documents.

(vii) The Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta and the Research Division, Alberta Department of Agriculture, shall, upon request, at all reasonable times have access to any land, buildings, or facilities where a project manager is conducting his research project or where he keeps any documents referred to in clause v(a) above.

6. Farming for the Future Funding Programs

a. Research Program

(i) Objectives

(a) To fund research projects that have the potential to increase net farm income and to improve the long-term viability of agriculture in Alberta.

(b) To augment and complement existing research efforts.

(ii) Proposals Considered for Funding

(a) Unsolicited Proposals

Proposals received on or before December 1 of any given year are reviewed and decided upon for funding the following fiscal year.

Where duplication with current research is evident or where Farming for the Future funds will be used to replace or supplement current funding, the applicant should identify the reasons for submitting a proposal.

(b) Solicited Proposals

On direction of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta, the Secretary of the Council or the Research Division, Alberta Department of Agriculture, shall request proposals for specific research programs either directly from the scientific/professional group involved or through advertisement. After review of these proposals, a recommendation from the Research Division shall be forwarded to the Council for decision.

(c) All proposals submitted to Farming for the Future should be directed to the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

(d) The Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta shall acknowledge receipt of each proposal and forward it for review and recommendation.

(iii) Program Committees and Review Procedures

(a) Program committees based on broad commodity groups shall review those research proposals in their commodity areas.

(b) The Chairman of a program committee shall be drawn from the membership of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

(c) Producer members of a program committee shall be nominated by the Chairman of that program commiteee within the guidelines stipulated in (d) below, subject to ratification by the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

(d) The following shall be represented on a program committee:
The Alberta Research Council, where appropriate,
Agriculture Canada,
The University of Alberta and, where appropriate, the Western College of Veterinary Medicine,
A member of the Alberta Department of Agriculture,
A member of the Research Division, Alberta Department of Agriculture, who shall be, ex officio, a member of all program committees, and
An equal number of producers active in the area of concern to the program committee.

(e) Program committee membership shall not exceed eleven; however, the program committees shall have the power to add such observers or participants to their discussions as deemed necessary.

(f) In order that proposals be reviewed in an unbiased, impartial atmosphere and to avoid conflict of interest, a member of a program committee whose personal proposal or a proposal in which he is a collaborator is being discussed will, at the request of the program committee Chairman, absent himself from the meeting until the discussion and voting on that proposal are completed.

(g) The recommendations of the research program committees and/or the opinions of those experts as requested by the Research Division, Alberta Department of Agriculture shall be forwarded to the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta for final review and decision.

b. On-Farm Demonstration Program

(i) Objectives

The prime objective of the On-Farm Demonstration Program is to provide financial support for on-farm projects that can

demonstrate the suitability and adaptability of innovative farm technology in a given district or region.

Other objectives are:

(a) to involve producers in the testing and demonstration of innovative farm technology,

(b) to accelerate the rate of technology transfer from researchers to producers,

(c) to reinforce the Alberta Department of Agriculture's extension and technology transfer roles,

(d) to foster a closer working relationship between Department staff, producers and agricultural scientists,

(e) to provide greater opportunities for Department staff to increase their awareness of research advances and producer needs.

(ii) Proposals Considered for Funding

(a) To be eligible, project proposals should relate to the demonstration and technology transfer needs of Alberta's agricultural industry.

(b) To qualify under this program, a project proposal must be developed by a team consisting of a local producer or representative of a farm organization, a staff member of Alberta Agriculture, or a research scientist or other specialists or experts as required.

(c) Project proposals should have regional or district-wide significance.

(d) All proposals should be directed to the appropriate regional review committee through the local district agriculturist.

(iii) Review Committees and Procedures

(a) Each Alberta Department of Agriculture region shall have a regional review committee composed of a majority of producers appointed by the Minister and not more than four Alberta Department of Agriculture staff appointed by the Regional Director.

(b) Membership on each review committee shall not exceed eleven; however, review committees shall have the power to add such observers or participants to their discussions as deemed necessary.

(c) The Regional Director shall serve as the non-voting Chairman of the review committee.

(d) The review committee recommendations will be forwarded to the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta for final review and decision.

c. Graduate Student Research Support Program

(i) Objectives

(a) To contribute to the training of additional agricultural scientists in order to expand the pool of scientific manpower.

(b) To enable graduate students in the agricultural sciences to undertake meaningful research both on and off campus.

(c) To encourage the advancement of agricultural sciences and productivity by supporting basic research conducted by graduate students.

(ii) Proposals Considered for Funding

(a) Eligible research includes project proposals which have the potential to increase Alberta's net farm income and to improve the long-term viability of agriculture in the Province or to advance the agricultural sciences and which would not likely be undertaken without support.

(b) Candidates must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants enrolled in a graduate program in the agricultural sciences at a recognized university within the Province of Alberta or at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.

Applicants must possess a baccalaureate degree or must expect to receive such a degree prior to qualifying for the research award.

(c) All proposals submitted to Farming for the Future should be directed to the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

(d) The Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta shall acknowledge receipt of each proposal and forward it for review and recommendation.

(iii) Program Committee and Review Procedures

(a) A program committee consisting of:
Two members from the Alberta Department of Agriculture, appointed by the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta;
A member of the University of Alberta, Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, appointed by the Dean of that faculty;
A member of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, appointed by the Dean of that college; and
A member of the Research Division, Alberta Department of Agriculture
shall review proposals and make recommendations to the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta for approval.

(b) The Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta shall designate the Chairman and the Secretary of the program committee.

(c) Upon completion of the review process, the program committee shall forward its recommendations to the Secretary of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta for final review and decision.

(d) Awards are one-time awards unless otherwise stipulated by the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

7. Reports

a. Progress Reports

(i) Research Program

(a) An annual progress report describing all work completed, initial observations and conclusions must be submitted for all in-progress research projects by December 1. In the case where the researcher is applying for continuation of funding, this report should be accompanied by an updated project proposal.

(b) Progress reports must be accompanied by up-to-date statements of expenditure and a statement of projected expenditure of funds remaining for the current fiscal year.

(c) An annual inventory of equipment purchased with award monies should accompany progress reports.

(ii) On-Farm Demonstration Program

(a) If a demonstration project requires additional funding, a progress report must accompany an updated project proposal to be submitted upon expiry of the co-operator's current co-operative agreement.

(b) A progress report must be accompanied by a complete statement of expenditures.

(iii) Graduate Student Research Support Program

If a graduate student does not produce a final report or thesis within one year of receiving the award, that student must submit a progress report, accompanied by a complete statement of expenditures, one year after receiving the award. An annual progress report is required thereafter until a final report or thesis is submitted.

b. Final Report

(i) The following reports are required of all completed (or terminated) projects supported by Farming for the Future:

(a) An abstract of not more than 500 words, written in lay language, outlining the major observations and conclusions of the project.

(b) A comprehensive and detailed technical report which:

- defines the nature and scope of the problem,
- outlines the objectives of the project,
- discusses the experimental design and analytical approaches employed,
- lucidly presents, explains and interprets the results,
- draws appropriate and warranted conclusions, and
- describes the implications of the conclusions for the improvement of Alberta's agricultural industry or the advancement of the agricultural sciences.

(c) A brief, non-technical report, if appropriate, outlining specific use recommendations for producers or extension personnel.

(ii) A final statement of expenditures must accompany all final reports. Unutilized funds remaining after the completion or termination of a project must be returned to Farming for the Future within six months of completion or termination of the project. Refund cheques must be made out to the Provincial Treasurer, Government of Alberta.

(iii) The Agricultural Research Council of Alberta reserves the right to disseminate all research information acquired under the Farming for the Future Program.

8. Acknowledgment of Farming for the Future Support

As a condition of acceptance of funding, the project manager agrees to recognize Farming for the Future as the source of research funds through displaying appropriate signs at the project site, recognition in scientific publications, recognition in popular press and "in-house" institutional publications, and through mention at appropriate public presentations.

9. Farming for the Future Annual Report

An annual report detailing the activities of Farming for the Future will be prepared by the Secretary and released by the Chairman of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta.

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